

DRAFT

Downtown Providence District Management Authority

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 9, 2012

1. Roll Call

Chairman Lappin called the meeting to order at 8:37 a.m.

Directors present: Umberto Crenca, Joseph DiBattista, Wendy Doyle-Spatcher, Robert Gagliardi, Evan Granoff, Susan LaPidus, Richard Lappin, John MacIver, and Christopher Placco.

Ex Officio Members present: Pleshette Mitchell, Diana Burdett

Others present: Dan Baudouin, Executive Director of The Providence Foundation; Joelle Kanter, The Providence Foundation Program Manager; Frank LaTorre, DID Director of Public Space; Frank Zammarelli, Block By Block Operations Manager, and Robin Remy, DID Accounting Manager.

2. Report from City of Providence

Pleshette Mitchell reported the city of Providence has launched the website savingprovidence.com where residents and property owners can read information regarding the city's fiscal crisis and communicate with state legislators to request help for the city. The

Tax Assessor's office has identified approximately 6,200 owner-occupied homestead properties that have motor vehicles not registered in Providence. The Assessor will work to ensure that these vehicles become registered in Providence and add to tax revenue. Burnside Park will be closed to the public during April to allow for power raking and reseeded to repair the grass damaged by Occupy Providence protesters. Director Placco suggested the city publish the repair costs. Pleshette reminded everyone of Mayor Angel Taveras' State of the City address scheduled for February 13, 7:00 p.m. in the city council chambers.

3. Approval of the minutes for the January 15, 2012 meeting

Director Crenca motioned to approve the minutes from the January 15, 2012, Board meeting. Director DiBattista seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was held as follows:

Director Crenca Yes

Director DiBattista Yes

Director Doyle-Spatcher Yes

Director Gagliardi Yes

Director Granoff Yes

Director LaPidus Yes

Director Lappin Yes

Director Macliver Yes

Director Placco Yes

Therefore the motion passed.

4. Financial Report

Monthly Financial Reports

Robin Remy presented the financials for January 2012

The Statement of Financial Position and the Statement of Operations show accounts to be in good order and in line with the budget. The Collections Report shows high percentages of assessments collected to date. Past due and delinquent assessments have been reviewed, and properties meeting criteria have been notified of intent to submit them to the city of Providence for tax sale in June 2012.

Dan Baudouin reported on the Assessment Methodology meeting held February 3, 2012. Dan reviewed documents from when district was created, including property owners' petition, management plan, and city ordinances. DID staff was asked to do further work to identify services and costs by zone, consider sub-districts, consult with attorney regarding changing zone boundaries, consult with Steve Gibson of Urban Place Consulting, and obtain information on square footage.

Director Placco motioned to accept the February 2012 financials as presented, Director MacIver seconded the motion, and a roll call vote was held as follows:

Director Crenca Yes

Director DiBattista Yes

Director Doyle-Spatcher Yes

Director Gagliardi Yes

Director Granoff Yes

Director LaPidus Yes

Director Lappin Yes

Director Macliver Yes

Director Placco Yes

Therefore the motion passed.

5. Economic Development Joint Initiative

The DID will reach out to existing Providence companies. An interview form is being drafted and will be presented at the March board meeting.

Dan Baudouin reported the Providence Foundation will be holding a meeting of its tax policy committee to discuss the fiscal challenges of the city. The group is expected to discuss the commercial tax structure. He also reported that the city's Commission to Study Revenue Sustainability and Effectiveness have analyzed the city's tax/revenue structure. The Commission's proposal is a 13% reduction in the commercial tax rate to be phased in over time. A possible new tax classification system is being studied.

6. Core Connector/Streetcar

The joint committee of the DID and The Providence Foundation met

with RIPTA on February 6 to study the proposed streetcar project. RIPTA needs to meet with Governor Chafee, Mayor Taveras, the Economic Development Corporation, and others to discuss funding. The findings of the committee are that the streetcar is a good idea (better than buses,) and the main issue is funding. The group suggests possibly starting the Core Connector project with enhanced buses and eventually moving to the streetcar. The group is recommending that the AMTRAK station be served with this system. RIPTA is still including property owner assessments in their proposal; the DID needs to formally object to any property owner assessments. The group consensus was that putting in rails will not on its own increase economic development; it needs to be part of a comprehensive plan that includes lower tax rates.

DID directors suggest riding the route on an actual trolley to see if the proposed route will actually work. Director Gagliardi expressed concern that federal, state, and city governments are not coming out and stating their whole-hearted support; he feels without backing of the city or state, the proposal won't work. Director MacIver stated his concern that the main beneficiaries of the streetcar (colleges and hospitals) won't be paying taxes to fund the program. Director Placco voiced concern that RIPTA is determined to have the trolley. Director Granoff is concerned that the streetcar would not connect business to business. Director Gagliardi reminded the board that DID accountability is 100% to the ratepayers and to proceed with the same caution when considering assessment for the streetcar.

Director Crenca stated that, with the streetcar proposal, it seems as if RIPTA and others are seeking a new vision and questions whether the streetcar is the key part of this new vision. Dan Baudouin stated that without state support, the project won't work.

7. Report from the Director of Public Space

Frank LaTorre reported on the project meeting for the upcoming Weybosset & Westminster project. All key parties attended the meeting. Discussions included paving, lighting, and the possibility of folding the ADA project into the city project to speed up the process. The DID is focused on moving this project ahead by staying in constant contact with Nate Urso and ensuring that project update meetings are scheduled and well-attended. Frank LaTorre, Providence Foundation staff, and city merchants met with Leo Perrotta, City of Providence Parking Administrator to discuss parking issues. Mr. Perrotta is lobbying for 1,200 more "smart" meter heads. The city is looking at creating angled parking on Greene Street.

Frank is reviewing "quality of life" city ordinances that are related to the downtown area. The Hospitality Resource Partnership is meeting regularly with Commissioner Pare as well as the Police and Fire Chiefs to address violence in and around nightclubs. The group is looking at a Supreme Court ruling that holds club owners responsible for violence and activity outside the club. Dan Baudouin distributed a handout regarding establishing a zoning special use permit to

operate a nightclub. Dan stated the extra control of a zoning special permit could help prevent unwanted nightclubs (not restaurants with entertainment.) A zoning permit would tie in the property owner, whereas the license only covers the club owner who is a tenant of the property owner. A new D-1 zone is being proposed by the city. Dan questioned whether the DID board wants to endorse establishing a zoning special use permit. The issue was tabled for discussion at the next meeting.

8. Marketing Report

Joelle Kanter handed out copies of the eNewsletter. Joelle reported she is in Phase II of the design stage for Wayfinding Signage; the next phase will be fundraising. Joelle met with several representatives of downtown residential properties and discussed developing a cooperative marketing effort.

9. Report from Block-By-Block

Frank Zammarelli reported that the final order for spring plantings has been placed with Jacavone Nursery. Frank will be attending Block-By-Block's Annual Meeting in March; he is scheduled to receive training on the new smart phone data collection system.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin J. Remy

Accounting Manager, Downtown Improvement District